

**BELLEVUE CORRIDOR COMMUNITY PLAN
AD-HOC CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

MINUTES

SAM PIPES CONFERENCE ROOM
678 W. 18TH STREET
MERCED, CALIFORNIA

THURSDAY
AUGUST 15, 2013

(A) CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson SPRIGGS called the meeting to order at 1:37 p.m.

(B) ROLL CALL

Present: Committee Members:

Susan Gerhardt
Dan Holmes
Sharon Hunt Dicker
Bill Hvidt
Lee Kolligian
Walt Lopes
Carole McCoy
Jeff Pennington
Steve Simmons
Justi Smith
Bill Spriggs
Steve Tinetti
Diana Westmoreland Pedrozo (arrived at
2:00 p.m.)

Absent: Committee Members:

Jerry Callister (excused)
Melbourne Gwin, Jr. (excused)
Richard Kirby (excused)
Ken Robbins (excused)
Greg Thompson (excused)

Staff Present:

Bill King, Principal Planner

Consultants Present:

Lisa Wise
David Sargent
Patrick Gilster

(C) APPROVE MINUTES OF MAY 2 AND JULY 11, 2013

M/S SIMMONS-HOLMES and carried by unanimous voice vote (five absent, one late), to approve the Minutes of May 2, 2013 and July 11, 2013, as submitted.

(D) ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Rick TELEGAN advised that he would like to discuss infrastructure, specifically sewage issues at some point in the meeting's discussion.

(E) PLANNING PROCESS ACTIVITIES AND CALENDAR

Principal Planner KING spoke about the actions of the Committee at the May 2, 2013, meeting including advisory recommendations about: 1) the transportation and land use functions of Bellevue Road and Mandeville (Bellevue Road to serve regional traffic and Mandeville Avenue to serve local traffic with a significant transit service and associated land use variety and pedestrian-oriented designs); 2) open space network; 3) locations of Business Park and Transit-Oriented Development "character areas;" and, 4) placement of commercial centers (discussion to be concluded at today's meeting).

Principal Planner KING also provided an overview of the plan's draft policies to be reviewed later in the meeting.

Ms. WISE introduced the team present (David Sargent and Patrick Gilster), and provided a broad overview of the planning process to date and future meetings of the Committee, which would involve one final meeting in December 2013 or January 2014 at which time the full draft plan will be presented and discussed.

(F) DISCUSSION ABOUT RETAIL AT G AND BELLEVUE:

This discussion occurred as part of item G, after the break.

(G) DRAFT PLAN CORE ELEMENTS (Land Use, Circulation, Open Space)

Mr. Sargent's powerpoint presentation was arranged as a "visual questionnaire" filled with imagery of ways in which the plan area could be developed, and structured with time for the Committee to ask questions and make comments about, in order to be sure to incorporate the community's ideas into a more definitive level before the plan is fully developed. Mr. Sargent presented several topics:

Complete Streets: A goal of the plan is to create “transit-servable places.” A foundation of this goal is to create a network of complete streets so the population can safely and comfortably walk or ride a bike to and from work and home.

Committee Member KOLLIGIAN asked about the design of Gardner Road. Mr. Sargent described the area south of the intersection of Gardner Road and Bellevue Road as an important business center, and that the typical 5-lane arterial with walls would cut it in half. Rather, provide roadway features to carry the anticipated traffic, but which may have fewer travel lanes, with or without on-street parking, and slow the vehicle speeds. This would be tested in subsequent traffic modeling. Committee Member KOLLIGIAN cautioned against going with a design similar to the funneling of M Street north of Cardella Road. Mr. Sargent stated the M Street design would not be used on Gardner Road.

Committee Member DICKER asked about the map showing the possible future location of Campus Parkway, and asked that the image shown at today’s meeting not be included in the Bellevue Community Plan.

Mr. Sargent continued to describe the functional street layout for the area including arterials, collectors, important local streets, important block pattern to support transit, and the Mandeville transit-corridor. Principal Planner KING noted that the handout (page 13) includes language that describes the illustrative nature of the local street block pattern, as discussed by the Committee in May 2013. Mr. Sargent noted that at some point in time, performance standards should be developed as a tool to identify the minimum level of street connectivity needed in the plan to achieve the goal creating “transit-servable places.”

Bellevue Road Design: Mr. Sargent described the different potential designs for Bellevue Road including: 1) 6-lane arterial with intersections every ½ mile (BAU); 2) 6-lane arterial with intersections every ½ mile, plus side-roads with parking (angled or parallel, single or double-loaded) and driveways to adjacent uses, and allowing a variety of building types and uses to face the side road, this option allows side traffic to operate without affecting the through traffic on the 6-lane arterial; 3) a 4-6 lane arterial that allows signalized street intersections every ¼ mile, and traffic moves at 35 mph, possibly with bike lanes and on-street parking; and 4) option (3) with one-way side road with the features noted above.

Committee Member HOLMES noted that the traffic model will still need to include through traffic that will occur in the planning area. Mr. TELEGAN asked about

driveway access to the side roads. Committee Member HOLMES asked if these different types can occur along the 2 mile stretch and MR. SARGENT said there should be consistency for at least a ¼ mile length. Committee Member WESTMORELAND-PEDROZO asked if the expressway design that exists off of SR 99 will continue all the way to and including Bellevue Road. Mr. Sargent commented that traffic from SR 99 will not travel a loop through Merced, but will function more as an access to local sites, such as UC Merced. Thus, in the plan, Bellevue Road is not being designed as an expressway. The design of Bellevue Road is more about creating and enhancing the adjacent neighborhood, rather than just serving as a through road for regional traffic and adding no value to adjacent properties.

Mandeville Road Design: Mr. Sargent described the transit-corridor with a future bus-rapid transit (BRT) lane, auto lanes, parking and bike lane, as well as the different land uses that would front it within the planning area. Mr. TELEGAN asked how the plan envisions Mandeville Avenue extending west of G Street and into the Bellevue Ranch development, because the plan shows it going to M Street. Mr. Sargent noted there isn't room for a dedicated transit lane, but that the bus service would run along that existing road sharing the road with vehicles. Mr. LAKIREDDY asked about the reasoning behind discouraging Bellevue Road as an expressway, because if there are many commercial corridors, then wouldn't slowing traffic create a mess in the future? Mr. Sargent clarified that slower traffic can actually move more cars than faster traffic. Poorly operating intersections have the potential to degrade capacity. Bellevue Road would need to include synchronized traffic signals, and perhaps the use of traffic roundabouts. Mr. Sargent also clarified that these roads are not commercial corridors, but rather walkable and livable streets that will have a variety of adjacent land uses, including those with high concentrations of employees. Mandeville Avenue could also become mainly residential. Committee Member WESTMORELAND-PEDROZO commented that the M Street transit-corridor needs to be reassessed, especially given the new railroad under-crossing. She also pointed out that having an understanding of regional traffic, truck traffic, and design of Campus Parkway are factors that can be used to help determine the function of Bellevue Road. Committee Member HVIDT commented that an informed decision needs to be based on the cost of the infrastructure that is being proposed in the plan area. Chairperson SPRIGGS commented that first there needs to be foresight to set aside space for a transit line, arterials and expressways to accommodate the needs of a growing community, regardless of the time to pay and construct it. The Committee discussed the role of the market in being able to, or not pay for planned infrastructure, and whether or not the market exists to develop property. Ms. WISE noted that the plan will include options to facilitate the kind of development that could occur, and

not come up with a detailed design, and at this level of planning, financial planning is not necessary. Principal Planner KING informed the Committee of the City's Municipal Services Review and its Public Facilities Financing Plan that address the costs of infrastructure improvements (including roadways, street lights, and transit) that are proposed at the General Plan level. Mr. Sargent commented that the mobility elements of the plan are being devised to maximize developability and to generate value along the roadways edges as opposed to a narrow view of merely creating a buffer from traffic noise and pollution. Continuing the discussion on Mandeville Avenue, Mr. Sargent commented that the BRT may be able to run with traffic and not have a fixed guide-way.

Other Road Design: Mr. Sargent described the designs of Lake Road, collectors, edge-drives and local streets. Committee Member TINETTI commented that it would be ideal to extend a bike path from Golf Road to Lake Yosemite through the planned open space.

Open Space: Mr. Sargent described the extent and types of open space throughout the plan area ranging from public parks to private open spaces in housing complexes. Mr. TELEGAN commented that the area southwest of Lake Yosemite could be used as a regional park. Committee Member PENNINGTON commented that the updated UCM 2020 plan included recreational uses at Lake Yosemite; Committee Member HVIDT commented he would be happy to present the updated UCM 2020 plan to the Committee.

BREAK/APPROXIMATELY 3:00 P.M. TO 3:15 P.M.

Continued discussion of agenda items F and G:

Mr. Sargent presented a series of possible building types that may occur in each of the plan's place-types (Business Park, Transit-Oriented Development, etc.) for the Committee to review and comment on. These images showed possible land uses and building intensity defined by height, setbacks, and lot coverage. Committee Member HOLMES, to help the Committee visualize, commented that the TOD area sits on a hill. Committee Member MCCOY commented that the view of UC Merced is attractive and tall buildings would block that view. Other Committee members commented that the view of UC is itself changing and will include tall buildings. Committee Member DICKER asked how the plan will complement the town center in the University Community Plan. Mr. Sargent commented that the development of either one would affect the growth of the other. The plan is designed to respond to those changes by allowing development of a different type, and in this way, the plan

is flexible by adjusting what is developed around it. Mr. LAKIREDDY asked about the connectivity of the plan area to the areas to the east. Mr. Sargent commented that Mandeville Avenue would go across. Mr. Sargent commented that the plan will emphasize connectivity and open space to enable many possibilities over time and with changes to the market. Committee Member PENNINGTON asked if there would be a “jobs metric” to determine how much research and development should occur. Ms. WISE noted that at this initial planning stage, and absent proximity to actual development, there shouldn’t be this type of assessment, and that this is the first planning step of many. Mr. Sargent commented that the flip side of flexibility is ambiguity, but as development occurs, it is important to more precisely master plan the surrounding street network, removing the ambiguity of the plan.

Mr. Sargent commented about his involvement in the Silicon Valley to “re-make” an existing business park to one that adds more local roads and adding bikeways and pedestrian walkways, to create a lively urban environment where employees from different companies can mingle informally. The old model of driving in from the countryside, parking and then driving home is not the model that will attract and retain a highly educated and smart workforce. Mr. Sargent commented that the plan builds this from scratch, as opposed to the “remake” underway in the Silicon Valley. Mr. NICHOLSON commented whether the pattern of land uses proposed is similar to what is occurring in the Bay Area, and the value of placing more Research and Development next to it or a mix of uses that is proposed in the Transit-Oriented Development area. Ms. WISE commented that this was discussed at the May 2013 meeting. Mr. Sargent commented in the Mountain View area, biking is becoming a significant form of transportation during the day. Committee Member PENNINGTON asked how a variety of land uses can be placed near each other without controversial public hearings. Ms. WISE noted that there are strategies that can be used to minimize these conflicts and to minimize the entitlement process. Mr. TELEGAN asked about the absence of school sites in the plan. Principal Planner KING commented that we are at the stage where general location of schools can be marked on the community plan land use map; these are marked as “floating schools sites.”

Mr. Sargent presented a series of slides depicting the idea for a Western Gateway Design to create an attractive welcoming space at the intersection of G Street and Bellevue Road. The idea is to create an open space with attractive building facades instead of ending up with a parking lot and/or the back of buildings. The uses could be several types, including retail, for example, the Fig-Garden Village model from Fresno. The open space between the buildings and streets would create an attractive space for housing, or mixed-use designs. The Committee offered several ideas that

could work in this gateway area. Mr. TELEGAN asked if there would be any assurance in the plan as to the availability of sewer for initial phases of development. Mr. KING commented that an update to the sewer master plan is to occur soon, and that the plan, without these infrastructure master plans, cannot itself guarantee the availability of service. Mr. TELEGAN offered the suggestion that the plan include a flexible alternative for on-site sewage treatment, noting that such a plant would be sustainable by enabling the use of discharge water. Committee Member HVIDT asked whether or not there are creative solutions to allowing development of lands next to UC Merced with minimal permitting process. Mr. NICHOLSON commented that development does not have to be in a City, so the real question is how do you get sewer and water to a position near the campus? He stated that the use of a reverse-tax sharing agreement could be discussed whereby development occurs in the County and revenues are shared until such time as the site is annexed could be an option worth examining. Mr. TELEGAN commented that development could be “outside-in” instead of “inside-out” with the use of satellite sewer plants, which the County and the UCP support.

Mr. Sargent presented a conceptual shopping center at G Street and Bellevue Road, similar to a design much like Fig-Garden Village, describing circulation and design options. If a center showed up in this area, it could reduce the demand for commercial services in the areas south of Bellevue Road. [The following dialog was shifted from the end of the meeting: Mr. Sargent stated that the design of the center on G Street and Bellevue Road has a strong statement at the street, but has a soft transition with the future neighborhoods to the north. Committee Member HOLMES commented that because of the property owner, he is comfortable with what his vision for the site is, as opposed to an unknown developer. He also likes the gateway concept and that the center would be constructed at an urban scale. What doesn't make sense is a large big-box shopping center.]

Mr. Sargent also described how commercial sites could occur in the areas south of Bellevue Road. Mr. TELEGAN commented that the rural residential area north of Bellevue Road is a significant change from the City's General Plan, and feels the creek should be captured as part of an open-space feature of a commercial development. Committee Member HOLMES noted that the bus route may be located on Gardner/Parsons Road.

(H) DRAFT PLAN POLICIES

Principal Planner KING described a few of the policies to give an example of how policy development for the Bellevue Community Plan can be developed, and asked

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the Committee for comments, several of which were discussed. Committee Member WESTMORELAND-PEDROZO asked how much sensitive habitat is in the planning area and whether or not resource agencies are going to require lands to be set aside for protection. Principal Planner Mr. KING explained that the plan's open space plan includes a large area of open space, some of which may or may not be required to be set aside. The amount of open space in the plan may be lessened after proposed development plans go through the permit process with the resource agencies. Committee Member WESTMORELAND-PEDROZO emphasized the importance to use existing information to minimize future surprises that result in modifications to the plan. She encouraged owners to approach planning and habitat protection from a collaborative approach to allow greater flexibility in locating development and conservation lands, emphasizing this to occur as a follow-up step to preparation of the plan.

(I) NEXT STEPS

The next CAC meeting will occur in December 2013 or January 2014.

(J) ADJOURNMENT TO AN UNDETERMINED THURSDAY IN DECEMBER 2013, OR JANUARY 2014, AT 1:30 P.M.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, CHAIRPERSON SPRIGGS ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 4:35 P.M. TO AN UNDETERMINED BELLEVUE CORRIDOR COMMUNITY PLAN AD-HOC CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING ON A THURSDAY IN DECEMBER 2013, OR JANUARY 2014, AT 1:30 P.M.

BY:

BILL KING
COMMITTEE SECRETARY

APPROVED:

BILL SPRIGGS, CHAIRPERSON
BELLEVUE CORRIDOR COMMUNITY PLAN
AD-HOC CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE